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FRANK LAYTON'S ENCOUNTER WITH AN ENRAGED BULL.

## FRANK LAYTON: AN AUSTRALIAN STORY.

CHAPTER XXII.

A MUSTER AND BRANDING DAY AT A CATTLE STATION.

SALVATOR ROSA—had he been living and present—might have sketched with effect the scene which  
No. 116, 1854.

the interior of the stockman's hut at Mr. Bracy's out-station presented, about a week after the stolen visit of little Joe to Messieurs Morris and M'Weevil.

It was night, and at no great distance around

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the hut were picketed some half dozen strong and serviceable but rough-coated horses, which, recently unbitted and unsaddled, were quietly enough feeding on the short, coarse, but succulent and nutritious grass of the run. It is with the inside of the hut, however, that, for the present, we have to do.

A bright and, for the season, a large fire burned on the hearth; and to temper its severe heat, as well as to give free egress to the occasional billows of smoke which refused to depart chimneyward, both window and door of the hut were thrown open wide; and ruddy gleams of fire-light were consequently cast upon the dark gloom of night which overshadowed the landscape. And far beyond the range of this fire-glare might have been heard shouts and laughter, and loud voices in amicable confusion, proceeding from the hut.

Within, and around a temporary table, large, rough and stout, sat some half-score of bushmen, shaggy, for the most part, as the horses which they had recently bestridden, and brown with exposure to sun and storm. Their upper garments were thrown off for comfort and coolness; and there they sat, reclined, or lounged, on block, bench, sleeping-berth, or bunk, as convenience dictated, and with small regard for the elegances of polite society. They were, as we have intimated, in their shirt-sleeves, and these none of the cleanest, probably; but this served only as a foil to display more prominently the gay, flaring, and rich bandannas which were loosely twisted round their bearded throats, and fastened in front in a sailor's knot.

The men were not idle; and a huge joint of smoking hot beef, home-fed and juicy, with piles of dampers, gave evidence that the fire had not been needlessly large and fierce. A large pot or kettle, bubbling and steaming, had just been removed; and before each man was placed a tin plate and pannikin, the former loaded with broad, thick slices from the joint, the latter filled with strong, odoriferous tea.

We need scarcely say that Price, Layton, and Barnes were the hosts of that evening's feast, and that they were attentive to their guests; among whom were the long, wiry stockman whose hospitality our travellers had experienced the night before they reached Hunter's Creek; another stockman from Mr. Irving's farm; a straggler from Boomerang; and two or three hands from Mr. Bracy's home-farm. While these men are employed, with hearty good will and amazing appetites, in reducing the bulk of the prime sirloin to a pitiful display of bare bones, drinking tea by the quart, and lightening their labour with conversation, let us hope appropriate to the occasion—we may say a few words respecting that occasion—a cattle-muster and branding—a serious and necessary business in the Australian bush, though vastly more exhilarating, we are told, than a fox-hunt, with the additional zest of being far more dangerous to the inexperienced, and which is conducted in something like the following fashion.

Having fixed upon his day, the stock-owner invites his nearest neighbours—and this supposes a tolerably wide range—to assist in the operation. These generally assemble the night before, with their horses and dogs. The host "provides shake-

downs, kills a heifer or two for fresh meat, and sets before his guests an unlimited quantity of tea. No grog—that is too dear in the bush, to say nothing of other reasons on the score of temperance. Circles are formed, the company all smoking short black dodeens round the fires, drinking tea, telling tales of cattle (not of *sheep*—all stockmen abhor the name) and of bushrangers.

"At day-break, after a most substantial breakfast, the horses are all saddled, each rider being armed with a stock-whip, the handle of which is about a foot long, and the thong twelve or fourteen feet. With this fearful instrument an experienced hand can cut a piece clean out from the skin and flesh of a bullock, and the crack of the whip can be heard for miles. All being now mounted, not in red coats, but in shirt, trousers, boots, and spurs, they set out, accompanied by a few dogs, having arranged each to take a particular direction, converging to an appointed place of rendezvous. No sooner have they separated on their different errands than the cracking of the dreaded whip resounds in all directions; the frightened cattle—the old ones amongst whom know by experience what is coming—hasten with alacrity to their usual camping-places, the stockman in full speed after them, heading them, if necessary, and driving them towards the appointed rendezvous; the others, who have been similarly engaged, have their charge also bearing down on the same spot, where most of the cattle on the run are ultimately collected, and the journey towards the stockyard is commenced.

"And now commences the sport in earnest. The mob of cattle is in a state of perfect excitement, ready to dash at anything. Not a few of them have already had a taste of the dreaded thong, the cracking of which still resounds through the air from every direction, accompanied by the shouts of the riders. Cows are lowing for their lost calves, and these for their mothers; rival bulls are furiously menacing each other, only again to be reduced to order by the whip; bullocks are bellowing, dogs barking, horses prancing, and altogether the scene is one of as pretty confusion as can be imagined.

"Onwards they go, the cattle evidently meditating escape or mischief. The front gets into a gallop, which is speedily checked by the stockmen. A declivity is before them, and away goes the mob down the hill, stockmen after them at a killing pace. Clouds of dust arise, which, at a distance, resemble those of the African deserts moving before the wind. The pace increases to a flying one, yet the horses at full speed will turn instantly, and head back the cattle, performing feats of suddenly twisting and turning, which, with an English horse, would be considered impossible.

"Every now and then, a beast or calf bursts out of the herd, and tries to head back to the bush. One or two horsemen are after them as quick as thought, their dogs following. Many bullocks are so fleet in this country, that if they get a little start, it will take a good horseman to overtake them. The men ride like madmen, taking the fallen logs, and great cracks in the ground, in their stride; their hats off, hanging by the string on their backs; their long hair and beards strewn

on their shoulders, mixed with the gaudy fluttering handkerchiefs in which a stockman delights.

"As the mob approaches the stockyard, a last desperate struggle is made to escape, for the cattle well know that the cruel operation of branding is before them. This is all their reminiscence of the stockyard, and having once gone through it, they are not likely to forget it. The stockmen are on the alert, as well as the horses, the latter watching every movement of the cattle, and as instantly heading it. The rush is made, and again defeated, though with difficulty, and the cattle are at length safely inclosed, but not before the horses and riders are one mass of mud, arising as much from dust and perspiration as from any other cause.

"The branding is effected in a cruel manner. The animal is caught with a noosed rope, which is dexterously thrown over his horns or round his neck, by means of a long forked pole, the plain part of the rope running through the stockman's hand, and trailing along the ground, the end being held outside the yard. The victim is then dragged to a part of the stockyard near where a large fire has been kindled: he is then immovably fixed, and a red-hot iron brand, the mark of the owner, is placed on his shoulder or flank, and kept there till it has burned completely through the hide, when the beast is loosed, to carry with him the remembrance of his sufferings till the next visit to the stockyard. He is, however, then only a spectator of the sufferings of others, as his own mark is indelible. His repugnance to muster-days is, of course, scarcely to be wondered at."<sup>\*</sup>

We return to our stockmen's hut, in the aspect of which half an hour had wrought some slight and unimportant changes. The stripped bones of the huge joint, with large gobbets of offal besides, had been thrown to numerous dogs, with which, some inside the hut as the warmest place, and others outside as the freest, were making themselves comfortably at home; and, bating an occasional snarl and snap, were peaceably disposed to each other, as well-ordered dogs always are, except when they catch some of man's pugnacious spirit. The slab-formed table was removed, the fire was replenished, the huge tea-boiler and quart pannikins were replenished also; and the rudely attired, strong-built, muscular, bronzed, and well-bearded men, were resting in various picturesque attitudes around the blazing hearth, which cast strong lights and deep shadows, as the case might be, on all within its influence. Some of the men had seated themselves on the earthen floor, and reclined lazily on the rolls of blankets in which they intended presently to wrap themselves, or on the well-worn saddles which they had recently quitted: two or three others were stretched at their ease in the stockmen's berths; another, standing with folded arms, was leaning, with broad back and shoulders, against the wall; and the rest were seated, in civilized fashion, on the timber blocks which, in a bushman's hut, do duty for chairs.

But, sitting, standing, or reclining, their occupation, with but an exception or two, was the same—tea-drinking and filthy tobacco-smoking; while story and jest passed from mouth to mouth.

## CHAPTER XXIII.

FRANK LAYTON IN AN AWKWARD PREDICAMENT.

THE grey of a fine autumn morning roused the story-tellers of the previous night from their light and short slumbers; and from the remains of the slaughtered beast, which were still suspended on the gallows, a plentiful supply of steaks was cut, which were speedily transferred to the glowing embers on the hearth; and the business of the day commenced with an abundant but hurried breakfast, to which the men devoted themselves with appetites apparently unimpaired by past exertions. This was soon over, however, and before the sun had risen two degrees, every man was on horseback, and the company was dispersed to different parts of the run. But having already described the general proceedings of a cattle-hunt, we shall, for the present, follow in the route only of our first acquaintance, Frank Layton; who, separated from his companions, but accompanied by one of the watch-dogs, proceeded at a hand-gallop towards the upper part of the run, two or three miles from the hut, where, in the near neighbourhood of a clump of wattle trees, a young bull, strong, ill-tempered, and more than half wild, had established himself in lordly grandeur at the head of a numerous mob of cows and younger cattle. Frank had previously been warned by his more experienced associate, that the job he had chosen for himself would be a tough one; but some rough though not ill-natured jokes which had been levelled overnight at his *greenness*, spurred him on somewhat inconsiderately, single-handed, to an enterprise which, without derogating from his manhood and courage, he might have left to more experienced hands.

A quarter of an hour brought him into the presence of his antagonist, who, quietly feeding in the midst of the herd, merely glared upon the intruder as he approached, and silently continued his operations. But this penceable demeanour was soon exchanged for a low, hoarse, and threatening growl, when the horseman rapidly rode round the herd, driving them, by dread and force of his fearful stock-whip, to a common centre. And when the stockman, contracting his semicircular sweeps, pressed upon the outermost stragglers of the mob, accompanying his evolutions with shouts and loud cracks of the whip—the dog also performing his part by snapping at the heels of the frightened cattle, and loudly barking—the animal, perceiving that some offensive scheme was in operation, lashed his sides in fury, and prepared for resistance.

Another crack of the whip, and another rush of the cattle, cleared the space between Frank and the bull, which, with a loud roar and lowered head, charged furiously at the horseman. Very alertly the good horse wheeled round on his hind feet, as on a pivot, and the dark sides of the infuriated beast received, as he tore up the ground with his short horns in passing, a severe stroke from the whip, which changed his roar, for the time, into a prolonged bellow of pain. But if Frank fancied that the spirit of the brute was brought down by the check thus given, he was soon undeceived; again and again the savage animal, now stirred up to revenge, charged full upon him; and it needed all the skill in horseman-

<sup>\*</sup> "The Gold-Colonies of Australia," by G. B. Earp: "The Three Colonies of Australia," by S. Sidney: and "Settlers and Convicts," by A. Harris.

ship he could exert to avoid a fatal rencontre. Meanwhile the mob of cattle was scattered far and wide, dashing across the plain—but not in the direction of the stockyard; and it seemed matter of doubt whether, without further assistance, the baffled and mortified stockman would succeed in collecting them together, even without so dire and determined an enemy in his front as the pertinacious and maddened brute. Lash after lash descended on the bleeding sides and back of the bull; but his spirit was unabated; he was evidently intent upon mischief, and was not to be beaten off with a whip. Probably, too, he saw that his antagonist was a raw hand at his work; was moreover getting agitated, if not wavering; that his horse was, at all events, becoming blown with its exertions; and guessed that a few more desperate charges would insure him the victory. Once more, then, with eyes glaring savagely, and meaning mischief and death to horse and rider if he could accomplish it, with a terrific howl, rather than a roar or bellow, with foaming mouth, and erect tail, he prepared for a final rush, while Frank, panting, streaming with perspiration, and nervously excited, clutched his whip with an unsteady hand, and prepared for the onset.

The onset was made; and in a second, the young stockman found himself rolling on the ground, holding on to his horse's bridle, while the roar of the bull, careering past, sounded in his ears like a horrid note of triumph. It was well for Frank that the impetus of the animal carried him on some distance before he could recover himself and turn upon the prostrate foe, who lost no time in starting to his feet, gratified to find that limbs, body, and brains were, for the present, sound and in their right places. It was not easy, however, to remount the terrified and trembling horse, who had indeed escaped the horns of the bull, but had otherwise borne the full force of the charge.

The young stockman's situation was now critical enough: himself exhausted; his dog, in obedience to his own orders, chasing the herd of cattle, and now out of sight; his horse resisting his efforts to remount; and his infuriated enemy in the act of closing his eyes and lowering his head for the final rush which was to complete his triumph and satiate his vengeance.

At this moment, and while Frank was rapidly debating in his own mind whether it would not be wise to abandon his horse, and attempt to escape to the friendly shelter of the trees, which were not far distant, a shout reached his ear; and before he could collect his thoughts, he heard the rapid approach of a horseman, the loud report of the stock-whip, a scream rather than a bellow of pain from the bull, and was aware that an ally—fresh as the Prussians at Waterloo—had entered the field, and was already turning the scale of victory. For one moment, the bull turned his glaring, blood-shot eyes towards his new adversary; and then, perhaps calculating that the odds were against him, made towards the plain with the impetuosity of fear.

By this time, Layton had managed to remount his horse, and advancing towards the stranger—for his deliverer was a stranger—he thanked him warmly for the timely assistance which had probably saved his life.

"Well, I should say 'tis likely it may be so," said the stranger coolly; "for I could see the dark-skin meant something at last; and you were in a rather awkward fix, young fellow. But are you seriously hurt?"

Frank was not sure, he said; but he rather believed there was not much the matter. And once again, he expressed his obligations to the stranger, whose arrival had been so opportune.

"Oh," replied the man, "I saw it was time to put in my oar. You would not have thanked me for coming sooner, I dare say; or I might, for I have been looking on this half-hour from among the trees there. But I reckon there's something else to do yet, so let us set about it."

The stranger's tone was sharp and not altogether civil, Frank thought; and when he looked into his face there was nothing very prepossessing there. A suspicion, too, came into his mind that he had seen the man before, though, in the confused state of his faculties, he couldn't recollect where. He thought, too, that it was not the most friendly action (or inaction rather) in the world to leave him to the last extremity, when a dozen slight casualties might have prevented the tardy rescue. He said nothing, however; but putting spurs to his horse, he bounded over the plain in the track of the scattered herd, towards which the bull had fled; and, accompanied and assisted by the stranger, succeeded in collecting and driving them towards the stockyard, which was, by the time he reached it, a scene of busy and noisy confusion.

#### CHAPTER XXIV.

THE PERILS OF A BRANDING DAY.—M'WEEVIL NARROWLY ESCAPES DESTRUCTION.

THREE hours or more had been occupied by Frank in his part of the proceedings; and the greater part of the cattle were by this time collected. Mr. Bracy, his overseer, and Mr. Irving, had arrived from Hunter's Creek. A table was stationed at the entrance of the stockyard, with stock-book and materials for writing: the fire was kindled for heating the branding irons; and the dismounted assistants were waiting the last arrival of stock and the closing of the gate.

As Frank, still accompanied by the stranger, passed his employer, he perceived a cloud on his brow, which deepened when the man familiarly addressed him.

"I was not aware that we should have the pleasure of your assistance to-day, Mr. M'Weevil," said Mr. Bracy.

"I am here, for all that, however," replied Mr. M'Weevil, the sound of whose name at once recalled to Layton's remembrance the scene at the tavern, the secret recess in the mountains, and the suspicion attaching to the man and his partner; and he could not help wondering at the cool assurance of the fellow. "I am here for all that, Mr. Bracy; and I am come to tell you I think it an unneighbourly and unpolite sort of thing not to have given me notice of this spree. I fancied there was a mistake about it, and I am here to see."

"We fancied we could do without troubling you, Mr. M'Weevil," replied the owner of the run, in a tone of restraint.

"I reckon your man here doesn't think so,"



retorted M'Weevil, "unless he has a fancy for being made dingoes' meat of."

"It is very true, sir," said Frank; "I was thrown, and at the mercy of yonder bull, when Mr. M'Weevil, if that is his name, came to my help;" and he told, with the warmth of generous and grateful feeling, the danger from which he had been rescued.

"I beg Mr. M'Weevil's pardon then, and thank him heartily for his assistance," said Mr. Bracy; and he spoke heartily too; and the cloud cleared off at once, as he offered the man his hand. "Let that clear off all old scores," he added.

The offered hand was taken. "I don't know what old scores you can mean, Mr. Bracy," he said; "but let that pass now;" and he rode forward towards the stockyard, thinking—if we may venture to guess at thoughts which were never expressed—that it would be better to submit quietly to the implication Mr. Bracy's words contained than to demand an explanation which might have been attended with awkward results. The reader will remember that Mr. M'Weevil's conscience was not a very clear one; that his presence was an act either of bravado or of deep craft; that he was ignorant of the precise degree of information Mr. Bracy might have obtained of the dishonest practices of himself and his partner; and it may be judged that he was well enough contented with the full indemnity his injured neighbour had been pleased to offer. At all events, it was observed that through the day the suspected man threw into his manner an air of cordiality, and that the assistance he rendered seemed prompted by a desire to wipe out all remembrance of ill-blood between himself and his neighbour.

While the by-play was going on between this man and Mr. Bracy, the preliminary arrangements were completed, and the real business of the day commenced amidst noise and tumult more easily to be imagined than described. Men, half stripped, are dashing among the scared beasts, singling out the unbranded, and cautiously advancing to fix the treacherous noose. Then comes the desperate plunging of the terrified animal, while the rope, held by half a dozen men, is gradually drawn in and wound round the branding-post, till the head of the victim is immovably fixed, while its legs are secured by another rope. "Sometimes the animal is branded standing, his legs merely confined by the leg rope, either held by men, or fastened to another post; or else, if very wild and powerful, he is legged and thrown, and tied fast, and then branded. When some of them get up, everybody must be out of the yard. Some degree of nerve is required to untie a beast; the best way is to keep behind it, and out of the way. Some men will stand their ground, and some always nip up over the fence as speedily as they can. Generally, the danger is more in appearance than reality. Only now and then, when a real 'Russian' happens to be among the mob, circumspection must positively be practised as well as bravery. Beasts have been known to break three strong ropes, one after the other, charge everybody out of the yard, and then go over a six-rail fence at a flying leap, and get away unconquered to their wilds again."

Three or four hours had thus passed away.

Brand after brand had been affixed, and the tormented animals had been duly registered. The muster was nearly completed, when a young bull, which had hitherto evaded every effort of the wary stockman, was declared, with a loud shout of triumph, to be safely noosed at last. It was the same animal which had given Layton such severe exertion, and placed him in such imminent danger, earlier in the day.

"We shall have something to do now," exclaimed the long, wiry stockman, who, with others, was holding the rope on the outside of the fence. "That fellow ought to have had a brand on him long ago; so look out, and pull with a will."

Mr. Irving, Tom Price, and Frank were in the yard, and were watchfully avoiding the mad charges of the beast, as it bounded towards each in turn, and at every movement was drawn nearer and nearer to the fence.

"This is my affair," shouted M'Weevil, springing over the rails; "I have had one touch at him this morning already; he shall know me again before I have done with him. Get ready the brand, there!"

"Another rope!" shouted Price, in high excitement; "quick! mates; this is giving; out of the way all, if you care for life." As he spoke, another noosed rope was put into his hands, and, throwing from him the pole which till now he had retained, he sprang to the side of the bull and slipped the second rope over his horns. The action was prompt and dexterous as it was daring, and so well timed that another moment would have been too late. As the stockman threw himself back, the first rope snapped with a loud report, and the beast rushed towards him. Happily, the second rope was faithful to its trust, and while Price stepped aside and suffered the animal to bound savagely by, within a yard of the spot on which he stood, the slack of the rope was rapidly drawn in, and in another minute the foaming mouth and glaring eyes of the furious beast were brought into contact with the strong branding-post. But still he plunged desperately, and seemed to defy the malice and power of his persecutors. In vain, however; a few minutes more, and, helplessly tied and bound, the poor animal lay panting on the ground, and bellowing with anger, fear, and pain.

"Now for the brand," shouted M'Weevil, who, as we said, had joined the men in the yard.

"Is that to be it, sir?" the stockman asked aside of his employer, who was looking on. Mr. Bracy nodded, and Price withdrew.

The next moment the wooden handle of the brand was in M'Weevil's hand, and the red-hot iron smoking and hissing on the shoulder of the entangled beast. Every muscle quivered, and a deep groan was heaved from his broad chest. It was cruel work, as we have said; and neither stockowners nor stockmen have harder hearts than others; but they are used to these things. To Frank Layton, however, the scene was new; and he had not, without some feelings of pity, witnessed the sufferings of the poor animals that day; and when he saw his late antagonist writhing beneath the torture of the brand—more deliberately applied, too, than seemed to him necessary—he uttered an impatient exclamation, and turned away.

"You don't fancy this work, young man?" said

Mr. Irving, who stood close by, and witnessed Frank's shrug.

"I should only excite your contempt, sir," replied Frank, "if I were to say that I could wish the punishment were less severe."

"Not a whit, not a whit; I think the better of you for your feeling. I am always glad, for my part, when these days are over, and the poor beasts have nothing more to bear of it than the recollection. But the thing must be done, and I do not know that there is a more merciful way of doing it; and after all—but look out, young man; the operation is over, and in a minute the bull will be on his legs; and in such a case as this I always reckon that discretion is the better part of valour, as somebody says." Saying this, the farmer made to the rails, and sprang briskly over. Not so Frank, however, who stood his ground, and watched the proceedings of Mr. M'Weevil, who by this time had removed the brand, and was carelessly, as the young stockman thought, untying the ropes which bound the prostrate bull.

The result justified Frank's apprehension. Springing to his feet before M'Weevil had calculated on the sudden movement, instead of making use of his freedom in escaping either among the mob of cattle in the yard, or attempting to clear the rails, he turned short round with a vindictive roar, upon the unprepared and defenceless brander, and, with a fearful crash, levelled him to the ground. It was the deed of a moment. At one instant the unhappy man was carelessly and vauntingly defying the strong and raging beast; at the next, he was bruised, bleeding, and insensible.

The bull turned again to wreak his vengeance on the desperately injured but yet breathing man; but before he could accomplish his purpose, and while Frank, at fearful hazard to himself, and with but little hope, unarmed as he was, of averting the savage purpose of the beast, stood by in hesitation, the sharp crack of a rifle was heard; the bull staggered, dropped on his knees, rose again, gazed wildly round, then fell, and rolled over in the agonies of death. The bullet, true to its aim, had reached his heart.

"I have never had a cattle-branding without a loaded rifle by my side," said Mr. Bracy to a man who stood by, "since I saw a poor fellow gored to death as M'Weevil would have been, without the possibility of rescue. And now, boys, for the wounded man. He is not so much hurt as he might have been, I think," he added, when he saw M'Weevil slowly rise, assisted by Frank and others who had gathered round him: "he escaped the horns, for a mercy, though he did not get clear off from the hoofs."

It was even so. Tenderly conveyed to the stockman's hut, and laid on blankets, it was found that, setting aside a broken arm, a dislocated shoulder, and ribs terribly bruised but not fractured, the man was tolerably sound after all. Surgeons are not very numerous in the bush; but most old settlers have some slight experience in bone-setting; and Mr. Irving had the additional advantage of having, at some former period of his history, deserted the profession of medicine for the prospect opened to him by emigration. We beg, therefore, to leave the unfortunate M'Weevil in his hands, merely premising that, with dislocation

reduced, bone set, and contusion well fomented, the man was conveyed in a litter to Hunter's Creek, where, by a kind of poetical justice, he underwent the course of water-grueling with which he and his partner had taunted their former visitor. In other words, he was carefully and judiciously nursed.

We must pass over slightly the remaining events of the branding day, premising that the following summary is more or less applicable to every such occasion. After the branding had been completed, a feast was prepared for all hands. Beef and mutton, salt and fresh, roast and boiled, were placed upon the planks which did duty for table, accompanied by vegetables from Frank's garden, together with damper and tea in large pots. Fresh tea was brewed, and stories went round until it was time to break up. And there were those present, probably, who, in the recollection of Mr. M'Weevil's rencontre with the bull, would have told you that, in their view of the subject, "the latter end of a feast is better than the beginning of a fray."

#### NEWSPAPERS FROM CHINA.

WHAT the sculptured monuments of antiquity were to the elder nations of the earth, the printed newspaper is to the great communities of modern times. Both are, to a large extent, faithful and vivid facsimiles of the habits, usages, tastes, and wants of the respective peoples by whom they were or are produced, and whose public and private life they serve to daguerreotype, for the benefit of all coming generations. We are led into this reflection by the sight of several numbers of the "North China Herald," of recent date, which have just reached our hands, and over the pages of which we have been glancing. This weekly journal is published at Shanghai, which, as is well known, is one of the five cities opened by the Chinese authorities to the commercial nations of the globe; and, as regards excellence of typography and paper, will not suffer by comparison with scarcely any of our metropolitan or provincial newspapers.

Glancing the eye down the advertising columns of this literary representative of a far-off land—so diverse from us in nearly all its social phenomena—we are surprised at the familiar faces from the fatherland which everywhere meet our gaze. A "North British" paper, in this respect, would hardly wear less the air and garb of an exotic than the "North China Herald." Here, for instance, we meet with that ubiquitous advertiser, Holloway, who has promptly availed himself of the recent concessions of our celestial brethren to slip his "ointment" into the land of pig-tails. He stands side by side with a learned disquisition on Chinese chronology and the dark profundities of the early history of the empire. Life-pills and cough-lozenges, of European manufacture, are also found in company with that new panacea of nervous disorders, Pulvermacher's hydro-electric chain. A daguerreotype artist, too, from Hong-Kong, makes his bow to the Shanghai public, and intimates that he is prepared to take portraits from one foot to a quarter of an inch square. London porter and bottled stout, sherry and French brandy, and other potent

beverages, are striving to secure naturalization in the Bohea land—an effort in which we can hardly wish them success. Peruvian guano appeals to the pockets of the Chinese farmers; and marine, life, and fire insurance companies urge their important claims upon the community in general. Amidst loans and lotteries, Chinese grammars and chain cables, it is gratifying to see an announcement which proves that British benevolence is budding and blossoming even on the shores of this vast empire. Under the head of "Seaman's Hospital," an intimation is given, that an institution for the shelter and medical treatment of afflicted sailors has just been opened, furnished with every comfort. And, lastly, we have a curious eulogatory announcement, not altogether without parallel in our own public journals, to the effect that "the gun-room officers of her majesty's ship 'Spartan' will not be responsible for any debt contracted by E—B—as their messman or steward, during their stay at this port."

"The North China Herald," although printed in Shanghai, is yet in reality an English newspaper. In its columns, however, we meet with extracts from a *bona fide* Chinese newspaper, the "Pekin Gazette," which is the organ of the imperial government. The following extracts will give our readers some notion of the journalistic literature and court news with which the ladies and gentlemen of the "flowery land" amuse themselves when sipping their native beverage.

"An *attaché* of the Korean embassy having hanged himself, the lieutenant-colonel, Le-wan-nên, who had charge of that embassy, is blamed for not discovering the cause, and reporting it."

"A treasurer's secretary in Hoo-kwang applied for leave of absence on account of sickness, and without waiting a reply he forwarded his seal of office and departed; for which he is to be cashiered."

"The members of the Literary Institute having petitioned the emperor, that the idol Kwan-te should be elevated in the scale of sacrificial honours, in consequence of his having interfered in a miraculous manner to promote the imperial interests at K'hae-fung-foo, the emperor orders the board of ceremonies to deliberate and report thereon."

"A secretary belonging to one of the boards having died, a Tartar young lady who was betrothed to him, insisted on being considered in the light of his widow, and as such devoting herself to perpetual celibacy; the emperor orders the case to be inquired into, and a report sent up to him accordingly."

"An officer reports that the imperial tombs have been injured by excessive rains."

"A complaint is brought against some Tartar troops from Moulken, who had arrived at Kechow, within the great wall, having created disturbances on their march, by demanding more carriages and horses than the regulations permitted, and then wounding one of the muleteers. The emperor orders the officer in command to find out the soldier who offended, and hand him over to the civil authorities for punishment."

"An officer named Le-taou-sang having met with a book on defending cities, presents it to the emperor, and requests that it be reprinted for general information. He says, ever since the rebels

have begun their depredations, various cities, both large and small, have been taken by them. This is not, he thinks, to be ascribed so much to the skill of the rebels in capturing cities, as to the ignorance of the officers in the method of defending them. A long period of peace has led to the neglect of military preparations, and when trouble arises, the officers have not a single plan to suggest, and, getting into a fright, they do not know what to do. Thus when evil tidings come, the officers are not to be relied on. The writer says, that he has recently met with the book above mentioned, published in the Ming dynasty; and having recently heard how the rebels have defended Nanking, Chin-keang and Yang-chow, he finds that it is precisely according to the method prescribed in the work spoken of: thus they have been enabled to keep those cities for several months, and the imperialists seem unable to retake one of them. Could the imperialists now be persuaded to guard the cities as these rebels have done, they would soon be able to overcome their enemies. . . . The writer says, in conclusion, that he is no soldier, but he is in the habit of making use of his eyes, and he begs to lay the result of his observations at the feet of his imperial majesty. The emperor's reply is: 'Let it be recorded.'

As was to be expected, many notices are incidentally given in these newspapers of the progress of the rebellion. Shanghai is, indeed, as our readers know, in the hands of the insurgents; although the latter are an entirely different body from those who form what constitutes, if we may use the term, the Christian army. With reference to that party, it is gratifying to find, in a state memorial presented to the emperor by some officer of rank, the following unintentional testimony borne to the fortitude and heroic self-devotion of its members.

"The protestant sect," says this Chinese memorial, "is only another designation of the Roman Catholic, both originating with the barbarians, and flowing in poisonous streams through the middle kingdom, dyeing the customs of the country and deluging the people—damaging the manners and wounding the hearts of the age. Those who once enter the sect, become so infatuated as never to recant; regarding death as merely going home. This contempt of danger and readiness to die excites the surprise of both officers and men. They are not to be confounded with the vagabonds of any other sect." This is certainly a cheering testimony, considering the quarter from which it comes.

The mandarins, in this document, give his majesty pleasant assurances as to the termination of the rebellion. The following is their language upon the subject:—

"Those lawless vagabonds who have been collecting and gaining strength for several years are this year to be entirely exterminated, and thus the ceaseless desires of the august emperor, for securing the tranquillity of the people, and for complying with the decrees of heaven, will be gratified; his illuminating intelligence will dissipate darkness, and his majestic awe will inspire respectful obedience.

"Furthermore, all the civil and military officers, and the inhabitants of the provinces of Kwang-si and Canton, without exception, revere the august emperor, and looking up to his virtuous example,



give vent to their rejoicings, which resound like peals of thunder.

"A portion of the brigands having been exterminated, the gall of the remainder will be congealed, and their bones will shake, and as for those who fled to Tan-chan in Ho-nan, they will be cut off in no time, as intimated in a former imperial command.

"We reverently," concludes this flattering state document, "look up to the gracious benevolence of the august emperor, which perpetually seeks the good estate of the black-haired race, and respectfully transmit this despatch on the destruction of the Loting banditti—prostrate begging for it the sacred glance. A respectful memorial."

The following "gracious answer" appears to have been returned by the brother of the sun and moon:—"The honourable ministers have employed ceaseless vigilance in repressing these disturbances. In looking at their memorial I am profoundly gratified. My will shall soon be made known. Respect this."

Great rejoicings appear to have been felt by the imperialists at the capture (and, as we may certainly assume, the execution) of a female connected with the Christian rebels, and called by the Chinese, "Mrs. Ching." This "criminal," as she is designated in the imperialist despatches, is branded as "the prime mover of the rebellion," "the perverse instigator of all evil," the fabricator of false reports, and the authoress of many panics." Again, we are told of this heroine, that "she stimulated the brigands to union and to activity, and by her wicked mouth expelled fear from all about her." We naturally feel anxious to learn who this heroine was, but the only information we can gather is from the subjoined comments of Dr. MacGowan, one of the missionaries, we believe, at Shanghai.

"Exigencies," he says, "sometimes arise in the phases of society, when woman appears to be called from her appropriate and retired sphere to take an active part in public affairs; and none withhold their admiration from those of the gentle sex who faithfully and intelligently discharge duties which may be adventitiously thrust upon them. Amongst those women whose good deeds are spoken of as a memorial of them throughout the world we are disposed to place Mrs. Ching, to whom the high ministers, in their address to the emperor, thought fit to apply their strongest invective. She may not have had the ability of a Priscilla in expounding to her brethren the word of God more faithfully, as she certainly had not the success of Deborah in efforts to deliver her countrymen from foreign thralldom, yet she seems to have had in no small measure the characteristics both of the Roman wife and of the mother in Israel; and we are justified in the belief that the heroine of Lo-ting was not unworthy to join the noble army of martyrs."

As an interesting pendant to the above paragraphs, we subjoin—gleaned from the same journal—a striking account, by an eye-witness, of a visit paid by him, some years since, to a nocturnal meeting of the members of one of the secret societies of China. The occurrence took place in the neighbourhood of Singapore, and the spectator of the proceedings was a Malay named Abdullah. The unscrupulous characters whose revolting rites were

thus surreptitiously witnessed must not be confounded with the men having the direction of the great patriotic movement which is now convulsing the empire; for while the latter are imbued, at least to some hopeful extent, with Christian principles and sentiments, the former are mainly an unprincipled set of lawless men, immersed in the besotted habits of heathenism.

The narrator says that anxiety to gain satisfactory information respecting the proceedings of the society led him to ingratiate himself with a Chinaman, one of the members, who agreed to take him to the place of meeting and give him an opportunity of witnessing their proceedings. Having reached the goal of his journey, by traversing short cuts, over stumps of trees, across swamps, and through water, he found, he says, three large sheds, one of them about thirty fathoms in length, and full of people. "When we were close to this bangsal (shed), my friend said, 'Mr. Abdullah, keep very quiet, and assume an air of stupidity.' Soon about twenty dogs commenced to bark at us. I was afraid at seeing so many of them together, but my friend called to the people in the bangsal, some of whom came out and quieted the dogs. The bangsal was surrounded with a ditch about three fathoms wide, and opposite the doors were drawbridges, so that they might remove the bridge and prevent people coming over without leave. When my friend was observed, three men brought the bridge and placed it over the ditch, so that we passed over it. On arriving at the other side, there were also two or three pit-falls, over which were placed marks; but if any came who did not know these marks, they incurred a great risk of falling into a pit. The pits were about three fathoms deep, and over the top was a slight wicker frame, on which dry plantain leaves were spread, and over which again sods were laid, so as to be exactly like the surrounding ground. Some people came and led us into the bangsal. Inside I saw hundreds of lamps, on the right and left, with people smoking opium. All round the bangsal there were heaps of sharpened stakes, and inside arms were arranged; the former being used for throwing at an enemy. There were also plenty of swords and bucklers, and sticks sharpened at the end like a dart, were resting against the wall in bundles. I asked my friend quietly, 'Is this the place?' He replied, 'Yes, this is one place; there are, however, further inland, five or six others larger than this; but to-night the people will assemble here, as this is the place where new members are received, and you will have an opportunity of seeing the ceremony, as they have just got five whom they intend to initiate; for the Hoys of Singapore are very bold and daring in forcing people to join their society.' I then asked, 'Where shall we remain this evening?' He said, 'I will get a place in the chamber of a friend at one side of the bangsal.'

"In the evening a drum was beaten, the sound of which was heard at a great distance, and soon after the people began to collect. In my opinion there were 500 or 600 people in the bangsal at one time, and, of these, there were not twenty who were not opium smokers. When they were all assembled, the noise in the bangsal was such as if people were fighting a battle. At this time I was



taken to the chamber at the side, which had a curtain, and belonged to the secretary. I remained here very quietly, and my friend brought to me some rice in a plantain leaf, a roast potato, and two plantains, which I ate in order to prevent my being hungry during the night. After the lapse of a short time my friend came again, and said, 'Sit here quietly; there is a hole through which you can see, and be very careful, as the people will soon be all collected.' I asked him to come and sit with me, but he replied, 'Don't be afraid; I am an officer of the society, and cannot be absent from the duty which brought me here. I will, however, come every now and then to see you; but don't be alarmed, as no one will dare to molest you.'"

About seven o'clock the people had all arrived, when they commenced eating and drinking. In about an hour this finished, when they began playing on drums, and going through a number of ceremonies and mystic rites. Then, after burning incense before an idol, one of the candidates was brought forward for examination. Having passed this ordeal satisfactorily, the chief asked him whether he was acquainted with the rules of the society; to which the candidate answered, "Yes; I understand that I am required to take an oath, by drinking blood." He next made the following declaration: "I promise not to divulge the secrets of this society to any one under penalty of death." A vessel was now brought, containing arrack and a little blood drawn from each of the members of the society, which, with a knife, was placed in front of the idol. The candidate then taking up the knife, made a slight cut in his finger, from which he allowed some blood to fall into the cup, after which the chief said, "Drink in the presence of Datu Peeking." The candidate accordingly drank a small cupful, on which the chief and all the confederates drank a little, each in his turn. The chief then said, "To-morrow go to our secretary, and ask him for a book; in that book you will find all our rules and secret signs; you will pay one dollar for it." The chief now rose, and himself lifted the candidate from his prostrate position, after which, being initiated, he was qualified to take his place among those who before would have considered him an enemy.

Proceedings like the above are common to the "Triad societies," which constitute the rebels at Amoy, Shanghai, and Canton. The body whose march upon Peking we are now looking forward to with such interest, must not, as we have above said, for a moment be confounded with these.

#### THE FERRY OF THE IRTISH, AND THE MENSCHIKOFF FAMILY.

THE Irtish is the first of the great rivers of Siberia encountered on entering that country by the ordinary route from Europe. After a journey of about two thousand miles from its source in Chinese Tartary, it reaches Tobolsk, turns from a westerly course northwards at that city, and travels nearly a thousand miles more to the Arctic ocean, taking the name of the Obi upon its junction with that stream, though there is little or no difference in their respective volumes of water. The high

road from Russia Proper to its basin runs across the Ural mountains to Ekaterinburg, the central point of a mining district, particularly celebrated for its malachite works; superb specimens of which, in the shape of doors, chairs, tables, and vases, were displayed at our great Exhibition of industry. It then passes by Tumen to Tobolsk, traversing a considerable extent of thinly inhabited steppe, little better than a desert, with large tracts of pine forest. At about six miles from the latter town, the traveller emerges from a wood which has circumscribed his view, and enters an open country. He sees before him in the distance a rampart of hills, with white buildings on the declivity and at the summit, above which rise the pointed towers of monasteries and churches. This is Tobolsk, the sight of which excites hope or fear in the mind of the wayfarer, according as he is a voluntary agent or under compulsion. But before he enters the place, the Irtish has to be crossed, which is here divided into several channels. In winter the passage is over the ice, in summer by a ferry boat.

The passage of streams is occasionally an incident of interest and of moment. Caesar led his troops across the Rubicon, and committed himself by that act to an irrevocable breach with the senate. The insignificant streamlet was of political importance, as the boundary of Italy Proper, into which no general was allowed to lead an army without express permission. Rivers are often the dividing lines of distinct nationalities; and on crossing from bank to bank, we come to a new people, with language, manners, and customs different to what exist on the opposite side. Though this is not the case with reference to the Irtish, its passage is an eventful transit to a numerous class of persons. By the Russian law, those who offer themselves for the public service in Siberia, whether civil or military, gain a step in promotion on crossing the river, and are entitled to retain it on returning home after a three years' sojourn in the dreary interior. The love of rank, with the profit commonly connected with it, everywhere a strong passion, is peculiarly so in the dominions of the autocrat. It annually leads a crowd of officers from the capitals of the mother country to this less inviting part of the empire, in order to realise the proffered advantage. But to others—those condemned to a life of exile—the passage of the river has a different signification. It is the last step in the mournful road to the full realisation of their sentence—the seal of their social and political death.

From the western parts of the empire, the exiles are usually sent separately to Nijnei Novgorod, and are there arranged in travelling gangs to pursue their common journey. Adjoining the crown post-houses on the road, there is usually a building divided into numerous quadrangular chambers, side by side, the wooden walls of which are coloured yellow, and the roof reddened with ochre. These buildings bear the name of Ostrog, a barricade or fort, as they are surrounded with a fence of palisades. They are intended for the reception and lodging of the convicts during their temporary halts. Their arrival and departure is one of the common sights of Ekaterinburg. Erman, the traveller, about twenty years ago, rated their number at five thousand passing through the town in a year, or ninety-six every

week. The women are generally in wagons. The men follow two and two on foot, and wear chains on the legs during the stoppages. They are guarded by Cossacks of the Ural, as they are called, the descendants of Cossacks of the Don, who wandered towards western Siberia three centuries ago, and conquered it for the Russians. Civil offenders of the better class, as officers who have been guilty of fraud, or breach of trust, are usually allowed to reside in Tobolsk. They are here compassionately called by the mild name of "The Unfortunates," and are free from restraint, except the obligation to perform certain religious penances. But those who are politically compromised, in proportion to the real or presumed aggravation of the case, are sent eastward into the interior, where, in the words of the poet Rayevskiy, every house may be said to contain "one of the volumes of human fate," or further to the north, near the icy sea, where

"In winding-sheets of snow  
Lies every thought of any pleasant thing."

This last allotment fell to the share of Menshikoff, the founder of the princely family of that name, whose present representative and head has recently acquired such unhappy notoriety in Europe by his arrogant demeanour at Constantinople.

Little more than a century and a half has elapsed since the name of Menshikoff was in complete obscurity. It was then borne by a boy at Moscow, the son of a serf, who was taken into the service of a pastry-cook, and employed in hawking pies and cakes about the streets, singing ballads and uttering diverting cries to stimulate the sale of the eatables. While pursuing this vocation, it was his fortune one day to attract the notice of the czar, Peter the Great, in the course of his perambulations, who sent for him, and was so pleased with his replies, that he took him into his own household. The youth improved his opportunities, acquired several languages, obtained a knowledge of public affairs, and ingratiated himself with his master, till he became one of his special favourites. He successively rose to the highest dignity, that of a prince and field-marshal, and was equally distinguished whether serving as a general in the field or as a minister in the cabinet. Menshikoff commanded the left wing at the battle of Pultowa, aided the foundation of the new city of Petersburg, secured the succession for the empress Catherine, and placed his own descendants within a single footstep of the throne. But a rapid and remarkable rise to rank and influence was eventually followed by a downfall equally sudden and complete. Peter II, grandson of his patron, who had been his pupil, and was to have married his daughter, so far yielded to faction as to banish the once powerful minister, who was sent to end his days in Siberia. He travelled as an exile, with a Cossack guard, the road which has so often been traversed by the victims of despotism, saw the Irtish, and was conveyed on its bosom to his appointed destination. This was Beresov, at a little distance from the left bank of the Obi, on its affluent the Sosva. The place is a fur-trading settlement, containing some two hundred wooden houses, inclosed on all sides but that of the river by a vast forest of pines, firs, and larches. It lies beyond the range of agriculture, owing to the cold, a three months'

summer alternating with a nine months' winter, during which time the streams are ice, while land and water have a common covering of snow.

The fallen statesman did not long survive his political extinction. He died in 1729. His memory is still preserved in vivid freshness by the inhabitants of Beresov, and many details of his habits, handed down by tradition, are often the themes of conversation. They point to the particular spot where he lived, though the hut in which he lodged was burnt down during the great fire of 1798, by which nearly the whole town was reduced to ashes. It is related that he used to go with his axe to the forest to fell trees, and worked with his own hands in erecting a little wooden church, now fallen to decay, in which, by way of penance, he served the office of bell-ringer. Immediately before the door of this building he was buried. No monument marked his resting-place, but the site was well known, and satisfactorily identified in 1821, after the lapse of ninety-two years. At that period, the governor of Tobolsk caused the spot to be examined, when the body was found in perfect freshness, as though life had only recently departed. It had been interred in permanently frozen soil, and hence preserved; for the earth at Beresov, and through northern Siberia in general, never thaws, even in summer, except to a very superficial depth. Hence, in order to construct graves, large fires are kindled on the surface, to render the ground beneath capable of excavation, and after the funerals, perpetual congelation recommences. So little change had the contents of the coffin undergone, that pieces of the clothing which wrapped the corpse were sent to the descendants of the deceased, as well as the heart, eye-brows, and some other veritable fragments of the man. The remains were re-interred in the same place, which is now marked by a small earthen mound, covered with turf, and surrounded by a wooden rail, but has no stone or inscription to announce who lies beneath the soil.

The Menshikoff of the present day, whose name has so often appeared in our journals, and will perhaps survive in general history owing to his connection with an impending war, is the fourth in direct descent from the exile, his great grandson, and must be now far advanced towards three-score years and ten. He served in the campaigns of 1812 and 1814 against Napoleon, took part in the invasion of Turkey in 1828, received a wound at the siege of Varna, and has occupied many of the most important posts of the empire. The prince is essentially a Muscovite, inaccessible to any sympathy with the rest of Europe, slavishly devoted to the will of his master. Yet there is another of his house and name, a nephew, who has played some pranks not consonant with the imperial pleasure, and has twice been sent to the Caucasus, as a hint that perhaps Siberia might be his ultimate and final destination, unless his manners mended. "How is it," said the emperor Nicholas one day to the elder Menshikoff, "that wherever I go, on to the English quay, to the Newsky Prospect, or to the Summer Gardens, I meet with your scrape-grace nephew idling his time?" We know not the reply made to this angust observation, but it was duly reported to the party interested, and elicited a characteristic response. "Uncle," said the audacious youth, "how is it, tell me, that wherever I

go, to the English quay, to the Newsky Prospect, or to the Summer Gardens, I everywhere meet with the emperor, idling his time?" The retort is not wanting in smartness and conceit, but it lacks truth. Few individuals are less open to the charge of indolence than Nicholas, though his energies have been devoted to the selfish task of simply maintaining and extending his own authority. While keeping stern and strict watch over the subjects of his vast empire, from the serf to the noble, for nearly thirty years, the autocrat has steadily pursued the ambitious design cherished by the Russian imperial family, that of not only having the Northern ocean for a fishing-ground, the Baltic to skate upon, the Caspian for a bath, and the Black sea for a pleasure pond, but the command of the Levant, by means of which to overawe the rest of Europe.

### LEZOUR VEDAM; OR, THE PHILOSOPHER'S MISTAKE.

[FOUNDED ON AN INCIDENT IN THE LIFE OF VOLTAIRE.]

THE winter of 1774 was one of the gayest that had been known in Paris for half a century. Louis XVI had just succeeded to his father's throne. He was a young and popular monarch, under whose government *lettres de cachets* promised to be less abundant than in preceding reigns; and though the court still remained at Versailles, the philosophers with their adherents, then comprehending a large majority of the wealth, rank, and fashion of France, mustered strong in the ancient capital. Taxes were heavy, but they pressed only on peasants and tradesmen; bread was dear, and destitution on the increase, but nothing of this was known in the fashionable faubourgs, where abbés, amateurs, and academicians, dreaded wits, and ladies more clever than wise, hurried from theatre, hazard-table, and ball-room, to *recherche* suppers, where they read all sorts of manuscripts, scoffed at existing institutions, and anticipated the golden days that were coming to France and the world.

Parisian society was brilliant at this period; and augmented as it has ever been by the rich and gay from every kingdom of Europe, England sent a more than usual number to swell its ranks, and among them two young and most promising brothers, known to their acquaintances as Frederick and Henry Vernon. They were of noble birth and ample fortune. Frederick inherited a paternal, and Henry a maternal estate; but father and mother had been called from children and possessions some eighteen years before, and the orphan boys were brought up by their grandmother, the dowager lady Vernon.

At the period of our story her ladyship stood on the borders of eighty. She had been maid of honour to queen Anne, had known lady Mary Montague, had talked with the great duke of Marlborough, and read the "Spectator" when it came out in weekly papers. In quality of ambassador's lady, she had resided at the courts of Frederick the Great and Maria Theresa, travelled much, seen more, and shared in all the pomps and pageants of her time. To these worldly advantages, life had brought lady Vernon many a ba-

lance-weight. One brother had been lost at sea, another joined the last Jacobite rebellion, and died in exile; while Frederick and Henry's father was the last of seven children and a worthy husband, who dropped into the grave before her. Neither rank nor fortune could fill up these chasms; but lady Vernon had laid hold on more lasting consolations.

In the midst of courts and splendours throughout an age at once rude and profligate, a pure life and conversation becoming a Christian had secured for her the respect of two generations, and laid up a treasure of hope for her age. That age, though solitary, was not useless. Since the death of her last son, lady Vernon had resided on her own estate in an old but substantial manor-house, pleasantly situated among the orchards of Devonshire, where, surrounded by long-kept servants, and an attached and prosperous tenantry, she devoted her days to the education of her orphan grandsons. They were heirs to fair lands and a noble name, the last remnants of a once flourishing family. No wonder that the earthly hope and, perhaps insensibly, the pride of lady Vernon's age was set on them. All that tutors, schools, and colleges could do for the boys was done. In their pious grandmother's precept and example, they had that home learning which generally leaves a deeper impress on the heart and life; and amid these rarely combined advantages the brothers grew up high-principled, promising young men, whom scholars praised for their early-gathered knowledge, whom the young admired for their brave but gentle carriage, and the old approved for a thoughtful earnestness far beyond their years.

Frederick and Henry Vernon were singularly alike in person and character; both were tall, fair, and handsome. But that Frederick's hair and eyes were by some shades the darkest, passing acquaintances would have been puzzled to tell which was the elder. There had been a strong affection between the orphan brothers from infancy. They had no confidants, and scarcely an intimate acquaintance but each other. At home they shared the same sports, read the same books, sat together at table, knelt together in church. At college they took almost the same prizes, were attached to the same studies, and every one spoke of them as the Vernons.

The brothers had at length finished their college course in the old university of Oxford. Both had graduated with academic honours; and after a short residence at Forest Hall, as their home was called, Frederick's twenty-second and Henry's twenty-first birthdays were celebrated with high but homely festivities at the manor-house. Many good counsels, a clasped pocket-bible, and their grandmother's blessing were given to each; and escorted by friends, neighbours, and tenantry to the utmost border of the country, the young heirs of Vernon set forth to fulfil the period of foreign residence and travel which fashion imperatively prescribed for young men of rank in those days. The first requisite of that rule was to see the world of Versailles. There Louis XVI kept his court as the kings of France had done for three generations. The Vernons' birth and fortunes insured them an introduction to its best society. Ministers, ambassadors, and leaders of fashion



welcomed, complimented, and discussed the rich and handsome strangers; but though Versailles had balls, plays, and *fêtes* of every variety, a gay queen, and a most idle court, the wit and wisdom of the land were all in Paris, and the Vernons preferred to go there. All Versailles united in voting them too serious; but when fairly established in a handsome hotel in the still aristocratic faubourg Saint Germain, the philosophers were quite as complaisant to wealth and family as the courtiers had been, and learned marquises and academicians rivalled each other in showing them civilities. At their private receptions and select suppers, the Vernons were always welcome; scholars showed them curiosities of learning, wits addressed *bon-mots* to them, and brilliant belles paid them marked attention.

Life has wines for different lips. The gay, trifling, and gilded dissipation of Versailles had no charms for the thoughtful inquiring brothers; but these were strong fascinations. In spite of early faith and pious training, Frederick and Henry Vernon were gradually attracted by this clever company. Though the conversation was occasionally lax, often profane, and the morals of most of them about the worst in Paris, over their sound principles and noble aspirations the evil example had no power; but the scepticism which leavened the greater part of Europe in the eighteenth century, had found its way even among Oxford students. At college the Vernons had heard, disputed, and been puzzled by the arguments of Voltaire and his school, and now in the focus of that philosophy, doubts of all they had believed in were forced upon their minds, and the brothers persuaded themselves that there they must search for truth. There were, moreover, some minor professors (in all schools the most zealous) who had set their hearts on converting the young English noblemen to what they called enlightened views, and for that purpose spared neither pains nor flattery. One of the busiest of these partisans was a certain count Perronet, a clever but shallow and self-conceited man, who had some wit, much assumption, and a bad repute for intrigues and gambling in his youth. He had been admitted among the philosophers, partly on account of his zeal for their doctrines, and partly because he made a good listener; but the count thought himself second only to Voltaire, and blustered about overthrowing priestcraft and liberating the human mind, as if he had been the prime mover of the school.

Young as the Vernons were, they did not believe in Perronet's pretensions; but by way of making himself notable, the count had determined at once to patronize and inoculate them with the new philosophy. Under his administration they were presented to chiefs, introduced to coteries, and saw every wonder of the day except Voltaire. That name now floated on the topmost wave of Parisian celebrity. It had rung through Europe for many a year, as poem and pamphlet, tract and treatise followed each other from his retreat in the castle of Ferney; and now that his admirers boasted he had put down superstition in France, the much-talked-of man was expected on a triumphal visit to Paris. Rumour said he had arrived some days before, but was kept quiet in the house

of madame de Winter, on account of one of those indispositions which generally affected his philosophy to the extent of wanting priests and missals; and the brothers talked over that report as they sat by a bright wood fire in their own spacious room, furnished after the fashion of Louis XIV, and looking sombrely magnificent in the winter twilight.

Their British minds set little store by such unstable wisdom, but the puzzling questions of the time naturally rose in the Vernons' converse. It was a corrupt system of religion and politics against which these men were striving. They had attacked feudal privileges and arbitrary power; they had shaken the fabric of Romish superstition to its centre; but their doctrines struck at the root of Christianity also, and the Vernons could not give that up. Their grandmother's prayers and bible still retained a hold on the brothers' hearts. In common with all thinking minds, they felt that matters could not last out the century. The churches of Paris were becoming deserted. Clubs and secret societies were rising in every corner. The court, the nobles, and the clergy, were rapidly losing popular respect; while a strange insensibility to that fact appeared growing on those orders. What should the end of these things be?

There was a quick tap at the door, and count Perronet entered almost out of breath.

"Excuse me, my dear boys," said he, "for there is not a moment to lose; I have just received madame de Winter's permission to bring two of my most valued friends to her supper this evening. It is extremely select, for M. de Voltaire will be actually present, and a discovery of immense importance has been made. There is no dress expected, but powder and diamond buckles. Make haste, for the muse's sake; my carriage waits below."

The opportunity of seeing Voltaire was not one to be missed just then in Paris. The requisite powder and diamond buckles were therefore quickly assumed. Count Perronet did not know the exact nature of the discovery which awaited them, but he said it would blast superstition; and his coach and six soon conveyed the party to the hôtel de Winter.

All that wealth and luxury had gathered round the old noblesse of France was there. They were conducted through a suite of brilliantly-lighted salons, considered empty, though half filled with waiting servants, to a *boudoir* hung with great mirrors and rose-coloured damask, by way of suiting the complexion of their hostess. Paint and patches had left little room for that; but madame, her train of brocade covering half the apartment, and her diamonds positively dazzling, received her guests with most flattering politeness. Her husband, the admiral, was supposed to be somewhere on the Spanish main with his squadron. Nobody missed him, however, for he was not known in madame's circle. The company were already assembled round a circular table, glittering with gold plate and Sevres china. They did not exceed ten in number, but there were names of which the world still talks: the men of the first encyclopedia—great in science, in letters, and in everything but faith and morals. Pre-emi-

ment among them, with his hostess on one side, and his no less brilliant niece, madame Dennis, on the other, sat a little old man, to whom all eyes turned, dressed with fashionable precision, but so thin as to remind one of a skeleton. It was the sage of Ferney, François Voltaire. The select supper proceeded with the most delicate dishes, *recherché* wines, and animated conversation; but when both the cloth and servants were removed, the hostess rose with an air of silent triumph, unlocked a richly-inlaid cabinet, and, taking out a folio manuscript, placed it before her principal guest.

"Ladies and gentlemen," said the great man, who had hitherto spoken less than anybody at the table, "this is an invaluable discovery. Myself and friends, whom I will not yet mention, have been occupied upon it for months past. It is nothing less than L'Ezour Vedam, the Vedas or Hindoo bible. By whom it was translated into French from the original Sanscrit, I have not yet ascertained; but a gentleman from Pondicherry, who happened to be in difficulties, sold it to my friend, the marquis de Villette, for a consideration, trifling indeed compared with its intrinsic worth. The price was five thousand francs, but you will agree with me that the east never bestowed a more precious gift on Europe, when I tell you that not only is the work four centuries older than the era of Alexander, but much of what are popularly called the old and new testament is to be found in its pages. In short, we now know where the early christian priests picked up their materials. Read, and judge for yourselves."

Frederick Vernon had observed that a slight start passed over the count when the manuscript was first laid on the table, and there was a singularly knowing look about his eyes; but count Perronet was a man of the Parisian world; it was over in a moment, and he bent forward as eager and amazed as any of the company. Page after page was read aloud by the chief philosopher. It delighted all present but the Vernons, and they were sorely puzzled; for whole passages from the gospels and epistles were there strangely mixed up with tales of Brahma's nine incarnations, stories of Romish saints, references to a high priest of God in the west who could not err, the duty of confessing sins, and to a holy wafer.

All the notables present showed their wit and learning on the subject. Arguments and evidences innumerable were brought forward to prove the antiquity of L'Ezour Vedam, and the reading and conversation continued to a late hour. The work was declared to be unique in Europe; and at the earnest request of their hostess, Voltaire announced his intention of reading at her next select supper, fixed for that day week, a paper which should be laid before the Academy, and would certainly empty the churches of Christendom.

The Vernons had thought much and spoken little throughout that brilliant evening, but everybody was charmed with the interest they showed in the great discovery. Madame de Winter adjured them to be present at their next meeting. The chief sage bade them a patronizing good night, and count Perronet said he knew they would be enlightened. Most of madame's company retired to a *bal masque*, but the dull November dawn

found Frederick and Henry talking by their long-burned-out fire. It was not an argument they held with each other, but a deep debate between their old faith and the evidence of that night. Was their bible then indeed manufactured from an old Indian book full of gross absurdities, and known to be almost a thousand years older than the new testament? All the doubts and reasonings they had ever heard returned with double strength on each mind, and they retired to rest weary and uncomfortable.

The week with its business and pleasures passed quickly away; but before its close all Paris knew that there was something among the philosophers. Meetings of extraordinary secrecy were held at all the patrons' houses; mysterious hints were dropped by the hangers-on, and informed men at the clubs offered ten to one that the pope would be astonished at the Academy's next sitting. The Vernons kept their own counsel, but determined to hear all that could be said. They accordingly hastened to the hôtel de Winter on the appointed evening. Count Perronet had called for them on his way; his friendship and zeal for what he called their emancipation seemed greatly on the increase, though the count's acquaintances generally remarked that he had grown extremely important over the secret, and talked of his friend Voltaire in a most familiar and confidential manner. A sort of belief in that learned and brilliant man was growing on both brothers almost in spite of themselves, and they felt as if his paper must decide their convictions.

The company sat round the circular table as before. New delicacies were discussed, new *bon-mots* uttered, and the business of the evening commenced with the appearance of that important manuscript, and a general request, in the florid complimentary style, to the great man for his paper. Voltaire returned the compliments of the ladies with large interest, made flattering apologies to everybody regarding the state of his health, but after some further pressing he produced the ready manuscript from his pocket portfolio, assumed an imposing attitude, and read on.

It was a skilful and eloquent analysis of the unique volume—of its origin, its antiquity, and the evident derivation not only of the church of Rome, with her doctrines and traditions, but also all the fundamentals of christianity from it. The philosopher traced the route by which these teachings found their way into Europe, through many lands and ages. He proved, by abundant quotations from classical and eastern authors, that certain Indians, who were shipwrecked on the coast of France some years after the building of Rome, transmitted the Vedas to an Arab tribe, who afterwards settled in Palestine, and became known to western nations as the Jews; that in process of time a sect arose among them, who formed for themselves a new creed from this ancient ritual, which they disseminated among the barbarous invaders of the Roman empire, and thus established the religion of Christendom.

The rose-coloured hangings shook with that polite company's enthusiastic applause, as the whole was wound up with an appeal to the reason and judgment of his country. Count Perronet was the most fervid of all, but somehow his zeal took

a critical turn, and he seized the first moment of quiet to say, addressing Voltaire:

"Monsieur, let me venture to suggest that you substitute 'common sense' for 'reason.' It sounds better."

The admired man did not relish such revision. Moreover, he knew the alteration to be absurd, and answered, with a look of mock solemnity:—

"Monsieur le count appears to have forgotten that common sense is somewhat too scarce to be talked of before the Academy."

Nobody could forbear laughing, and they did so loudly, for Perronet's pretensions were the subject of general ridicule. The count grew white with anger; but he looked at his watch as if recollecting an appointment, and with a bow to the hostess, said he was obliged to be absent for half an hour.

The count's criticisms, conceits, and assumptions were amusingly discussed in his absence by all but the Vernons, who could think only of what they had heard; but in less than half an hour Perronet returned, his face beaming with smiles, and bearing a small packet in his hand, which he craved permission to open, as it contained some curious letters on the subject of the Vedas.

"Further light," said Madame de Winter; "Monsieur Perronet, you are a treasure!"

"Light, indeed, madame," said the count, still smiling, as he opened the packet. "These letters are addressed to father Guy Tachard, vice-provincial of the jesuits in India, by ten brethren, concerning a work known in Pondicherry as L'Ezour Vedam, which the society had employed them to fabricate out of the Hindoo Vedas, the christian bible, and all the treasures of the catholic church, for the purpose of facilitating conversions. This work they completed, but it was suddenly suppressed when father Tournon arrived, in 1703, with full powers from pope Clement VII to inquire after and put down the heathen practices common in their churches. The original ms., which now lies before M. de Voltaire, was at the same time concealed, together with these letters, in a closet of the good provincial's house; but not so carefully as to escape the knowledge of his secretary, Gaston du Pont. Whether this gentleman had a little account to settle with the society, expected promotion in the church, or naturally loved tale-telling, I am not accurately informed; but he packed the whole up one fine night in the following year, and sailed in a ship bound for Genoa on his way to Rome. Madame de Maintenon was then in power; Louis XIV in consequence waited on the jesuits, and my grandfather being a commissary of police, was sent to Genoa with secret orders to intercept the secretary, papers and all, and bring him safe to the Bastille. Fortune sometimes outwits even jesuits. Before my grandfather's arrival, the ship had been wrecked at the entrance of the gulf, the secretary was drowned, and the papers he had carried so far were in the hands of a poor fisherman, from whom he luckily obtained them. Now my grandfather naturally thought that it might be well to have some hold over the society; so he informed his superiors that all was in the sea, and laid up the case in a closet of his hotel, where it remained undisturbed till a valet of mine, who unfortunately could read, stole the manuscript and

sold it to the marquis de Villette for five thousand francs, on which I hear he is making a great figure in Venice."

"Sir," cried the sage of Ferney, rising in uncontrollable wrath, "why did you not tell all this before?"

"I could not deny myself and friends the opportunity of testing the critical acumen and penetrating genius of M. de Voltaire," said Perronet, with a very humble bow. The chief of philosophers glared round the room for an instant, and then had recourse to his usual expedient when fairly defeated, namely, gathering up his papers and rushing to his own apartment, where it was said he locked himself up till late in the succeeding day, when the flattering entreaties of his hostess restored him to good humour. As for the applauding party, they smiled significantly at each other. One notable who sat close beside the count inquired with great surprise why he didn't keep the letters for the Academy's next sitting.

"Bah!" said Perronet, "one couldn't wait so long. Besides, who knew that he would ever read before the Academy?" on which he quietly returned the packet to his pocket, and the conversation was changed by general consent.

All Paris was singularly disappointed to find that nothing strange happened in the course of the next fortnight. The extraordinary meetings ceased; the informed men made no more bets; but the select suppers went on as usual, with only one subject of silence in all the philosophic circles, and that was L'Ezour Vedam. As for the Vernons, they were seen no more among them. That evening in the hôtel de Winter sent them back to their grandmother's bible with minds strangely admonished. Both lived to be wise and pious men among the fathers of England, when the harvest of that evil seed-time was so fearfully reaped in France; but they never forgot their first and last encounter with the prince of sceptics, and his learned paper on L'Ezour Vedam. Pompous as are the pretensions of infidelity, they will ever be found, when closely sifted, hollow and unsubstantial.

#### SMITHFIELD.

[SECOND PAPER.]

WE may suppose it is daylight by this time, and if it be, and you are not afraid of a little mud, or particularly nervous on the score of horned cattle, barking dogs, despairing swine, bellowing calves, and coarse drovers, you cannot do better than stroll leisurely—you will find it cannot be done in a hurry—through the dense mass of animal and human life packed together in this narrow inclosure. If you have a painter's eye, you will be charmed with the noble, honest faces and glorious orbs of that lot of long-horns, as they gaze wonderingly round upon the incomprehensible scene; you will see Landseer's curly-horned ewes and tender lambs, and sheep of every breed from every breezy down in broad England; and you may note the milk-white calves doomed to die this day in juvenile innocence, for the sake, to quote the joke of a cockney butcher, of the public "weal." You will remark, too, with what activity they change owners, and thus form some estimate of the value



of time in matters of business. If the ring-droves of oxen should remind you of King Arthur's knights, without their round table, you may be sure that they will not quarrel with one another about precedence. If one of them should break away, and come roaring and tossing in your direction, you need not run, so long as you keep a drover between yourself and him; but if all run, remember that it is not politic to be the last. Although the pope's bull no longer burns heretics at the stake in Smithfield, yet John Bull's bull does still occasionally gore or toss a victim, and qualify him for St. Bartholomew's hospital, which stands conveniently handy—or for the churchyard, which is not far distant.

The time for closing Monday's market is nominally twelve o'clock; but long before that hour the live stock has dwindled to an inconsiderable amount, and is on its way to the thousands of slaughter-houses which in every district of London infect the air and endanger the health of the inhabitants. Yet business continues to be done for some hours later; even so late as the evening of the day detached groups of cattle are encountered wandering wearily in the streets on their way to slaughter. It is chiefly in driving cattle home from the market that serious and often fatal accidents occur. The treatment that a poor beast endures, even when no deliberate cruelty is practised, during the forty or fifty hours preceding his death, is sufficiently bewildering to drive him frantic, and the only wonder is, that, numerous as are untoward accidents from furious animals running wild in the streets, they are not more so.

Much has been said and written on the subject of cruelty practised in Smithfield and its approaches during the time of or preparation for the market. It would be pleasant to be able to rebut the serious charges which have been made on this subject; but though they have often been, there is no doubt, much exaggerated and coloured for the sake of effect, we have seen enough in the course of many years' unavoidable observation to justify at least the spirit of indignation that produced them. We have seen sheep, maimed or lamed by dogs, and left to languish in gutters until they could be conveniently carted away. We have seen oxen crippled by long marches, and unable to crawl further, tied horns and feet by ropes, and slaughtered by furious and unskillful hands in the middle of the road by torch-light in a dense fog, to save them, perhaps, from impending death by exhaustion. We have seen—as what Londoner has not?—whole herds of them infuriated by savage blows about the head and horns, in the attempt to separate them from their fellows and compel them into the lairs. Further, the forcing of cattle into ring-droves in Smithfield is a process which cannot be humanely accomplished: it is and must be nothing more nor less than a sheer conquest over the instincts of the animal by the exercise of barbarous violence—a conquest maintained in force by the influence of terror. To be convinced of this, it is only necessary once to witness the spectacle, and to mark the expression of the dumb brutes who are the subjects of the process. As a contrast to this cruelty, and to the wholesale nuisance which Smithfield has so long inflicted upon the metropolis of England, we may

point to the practice of the French in relation to the same necessary branch of commerce. In the streets of Paris, the spectacle of droves of pigs, flocks of sheep, and herds of cattle, is a thing utterly unknown. The cattle-markets are held in the outlying villages of Sceaux and Poissy, and are under the surveillance of inspectors, who condemn to forfeiture unsound or diseased animals. When the animals are bought by the butchers, they are slaughtered, also under inspection, at the public abattoirs. By a decree of the 9th of February, 1810, Napoleon abolished at once and for ever the private slaughter-houses throughout the whole of the French capital, and instituted public ones to the number of five. In these, arrangements are made for inflicting the necessary death, without cruelty; and by means of a constant supply of water flowing in a continual current through the premises, and a system of ventilation which leaves nothing to be wished for, a degree of cleanliness and purity is maintained which, viewed especially in connexion with the disgusting filth and letor of similar places in London, is perfectly marvellous to witness.

It appears questionable whether the removal of the London cattle-market from Smithfield to Copenhagen Fields, Islington, a distance of not more than two and a half miles, will effect for the metropolis a reformation nearly so complete as Napoleon accomplished for the Parisians more than forty years ago. The new market will not be very long situated in the suburbs. Already is London stretching beyond the site, and it can hardly be many years before Copenhagen Fields will be the centre of a populous district. It happens unfortunately, too, that the approaches to it from all sides but the north are the reverse of commodious and convenient; and if cattle, after purchase, are permitted to be driven home by the buyers, numbers of them will have to travel double the distance they now do through the streets on their way to slaughter. There is, however, a prospect that as London increases in size, the live cattle-market will not increase in proportion. The railroads which have so much diminished cattle-driving, have also materially diminished the transportation of live cattle. Multitudes of carcasses of animals slaughtered upon the spots where they were bred and reared now arrive weekly in the London markets. Breeders are beginning to appreciate the loss in weight and quality resulting from the suffering which the animals undergo in their weary passage to London, and their treatment in the market; and many of them find it more profitable to kill their own produce than to commit them alive to the chances of the road and the mercies of the dogs and drovers. If in process of time the new Smithfield should become more of a flesh-market than a cattle-market, few will regret the transformation on the score of humanity.

But to return to Smithfield as it yet exists. On Tuesday it is a market for hay and straw, the long loads of which may be seen toiling slowly on from the earliest dawn of the morning to take up their position by the side of the now empty cattle-pens. The market is a dull affair, presenting nothing particularly worthy of note, unless it be the oyster-stalls, which in Smithfield, and there almost exclusively, dispense the rapid mollusc to a class of not

over-dainty customers all the year round. On Wednesday there is no market at all in Smithfield, and if the pens be occupied, it is by tribes of boys who keep up an exciting game by chasing one another in an out. Thursday is again devoted to the sale of hay and straw; but on Friday comes the supply of meat for the Londoner's Sunday dinner, and on this day Smithfield presents the nearest approach, on a large scale, to a country business-fair ever to be met with in the capital. With the oxen and sheep, which however do not arrive in nearly such large quantities as at the Monday's market, come a more liberal allowance of pigs—pork being a favourite Sunday's dinner with the London artisan—and to meet them, of course a proportionally liberal allowance of pork butchers. Friday is also the horse-market, when every variety of that section of the equine race doomed to labour come in bands haltered together, and carrying twisted straw in their tails as a sign that they are to be had for a reasonable figure. With the horses for sale comes that class who live by buying, selling, doctoring, manufacturing, speculating, and too often cheating in horselfesh. With the horses, too, come donkeys of all ages and experiences—donkeys London-bred and country-bred, and donkey-carriages too, as well as carts for any kind of quadruped, new and old, and neither—and sets of harness and traces, and horse-collars, with perhaps an occasional truck or wheelbarrow, or a set of farming or stable implements. It was on a Friday in Smithfield, some eighteen or twenty years ago, that we saw the worse than savage exhibition of a wife offered for sale by her husband amid a jeering crowd, by one of whom she was purchased, it was said, for eighteen-pence and a pot of beer, and led off by him. With all this variety of traffic, however, Friday's market is not, like the Monday's, overcrowded to an impassable degree, and Friday therefore affords the most convenient opportunity for a stranger's visit.

Saturday, again, like Tuesday and Thursday, is the hay and straw market, which seldom extends late into the afternoon, as many of the carts which come loaded with hay go back with manure, which has to be collected from the various mews in perhaps distant quarters of the city. On Sunday, Smithfield in the morning presents an aspect of striking solitariness and silence, to which we may add, of late, a very remarkable cleanliness, considering the purpose to which the ground is devoted—a gratifying fact which we take to be due to the dissatisfaction so loudly expressed by the public with regard to the filth that formerly prevailed. In the afternoon and evening of Sunday, if the weather be fine, it is not unlikely that you may encounter one or more of the city missionaries, standing in the centre of the sheep-pens, with his back against the rails, and expounding some passage of the new testament to a very nondescript group gathered around him, consisting chiefly of hangers-on of the market, and poor penniless fellows who are there awaiting the coming on of night which will yield them the chance of earning the price of a breakfast for the following morning.

In considering the circumstances attending upon the London cattle-market, as above detailed, it is impossible to avoid the recognition of one disgraceful and demoralizing fact accompany-

ing them; and that is the vast amount of Sabbath desecration which, under the current regulations, is unavoidable. The whole does not appear in the above description; but it must be plain upon a moment's reflection, that the animals which are driven into the market on the Sunday night, and sold the first thing on Monday morning—the major part of them coming from great distances—must have engaged the services of vast numbers of men and lads on the day of rest. Further, the foreign cattle, of which great numbers arrive weekly, are all shipped with the view of arriving on Sunday, in order to give the dealers time to judge and appraise them before they are exposed for sale. At every railway station, numbers arrive on the Sunday in long trains, occasioning an uproar and confusion at the stations, all the more disgraceful because it is plainly avoidable to a great extent, if not entirely, by simply changing the market-day from Monday to Tuesday. There could be no valid objection to such a step, and probably there would be no violent or insurmountable opposition to it were it warmly advocated by the public, who are most interested in its adoption. The steps which, while we write, are being taken to accomplish this object, will, we trust, be crowned with success.

#### THE BAD CLOCK.

A HINT FOR YOUNG PEOPLE, AND FOR OLD FOLKS TOO.

I HAVE a clock on my parlour mantelpiece. A very pretty little clock it is, with a gilt frame, and a glass case to cover it. Almost every one who sees it, says, "What a pretty clock!" But it has one great defect—it will not run; and therefore, as a *clock*, it is perfectly useless. Though it is very pretty, it is a bad clock, because it never tells what time it is.

Now, my bad clock is like a great many persons in the world. Just as my clock does not answer the purpose for which it was made—that is, to keep time—so, many persons do not answer the purpose for which they were made. What did God make us for? "Why," you will say, "he made us that we might love him and serve him." Well, then, if we do *not* love God and serve him, we do not answer the purpose for which He made us: we may be, like the clock, very pretty, and be very kind, and very obliging; but if we do not answer the purpose for which God made us, we are just like the clock—bad. Those of my readers who live in the country, and have seen an apple-tree in full blossom, know what a beautiful sight it is. But suppose it only bore blossoms, and did not produce fruit, you would say it is a bad apple-tree. And so it is. Everything is bad, and every person is bad, and every boy and girl is bad, *if they do not answer the purpose for which God made them*. God did not make us only to play and amuse ourselves, but also that we might do his will.

Maybe some of our readers will say, How can I do God's will? I will tell you. It is God's will that you obey your parents. It is his will that you keep out of bad company. It is his will that you always try to do what is right. It is his will that you pray and read your bible. And it is God's will, my dear young friends, that you believe in Jesus Christ, trust in him for the pardon of your sins, and pray for his Holy Spirit. Now be sure that you try to be *not* like the clock, which, though it is very pretty, is a *bad* one, because it does not answer the purpose for which it was made. Let every one, therefore, ask himself the question, "Do I answer the purpose for which God made me?"